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**Launching an event?**

Green Sustainability news

## **Celebrating 100 years of Biodiversity Science at Kirstenbosch**

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As part of the celebrations of 100 years of biodiversity science and Kirstenbosch, entrance to the gardens will be free on International Biodiversity Day on 22 May 2013.

This is an opportunity to participate in a number of activities and at the same time experience 100 years of biodiversity science in one day through an interactive display area, talks, films, guided walks and challenges.

The science undertaken by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) underpins many of the plans and decisions taken in South Africa. For example, understanding threatened species can help make better land use planning decisions, and understanding how the goods and services that our ecosystem provide can lead to job creation.

The goal of Biodiversity Day activities is to unpack the scientific mysteries of biodiversity and give a greater understanding of the world we live in.

Once visitors have participated in the activities, SANBI hopes that they will leave with a better understanding of the science behind biodiversity conservation and what it means to everyone. It is envisioned that this will provide a solid rationale for reviewing our habits in everyday life - for example by saving resources and minimising carbon emissions.

### Activities

The wide range of activities comprising Biodiversity Day will offer visitors an insider view into this fascinating world and show how this science affects all our lives. A journey through an interactive display area, walks, talks and movies are an opportunity to see what happens behind the scenes.

- The 100 Years of Biodiversity Science Showcase - Opening at 10am, The 100 Years of Biodiversity Science Showcase in the Old Mutual Conference Centre is the first display of SANBI science open to the public, giving all members of society the opportunity to see the science behind conservation work. It will illustrate the outcomes to which institute's work contributes, starting with the foundation work in classification, surveying and mapping of species and ecosystems, through assessing the status and trends in species and ecosystems. This enables science-based policy advice and the development of tools to support biodiversity and conservation planning and management. All this work relates to numerous aspects of human well-being, such as improved service delivery, job creation and good environmental decision-making.

- Once visitors have journeyed through the Science Showcase display area, they will be provided with an opportunity to place their biodiversity pledge near the exit and collect a packet of seeds to take home and plant.

- Walks - From 10am, there will be a number of guided walks during the day. These include the Centennial Walk around Kirstenbosch and the Centenarian Walk that visits the garden's oldest and most distinguished residents - plants that have been growing at Kirstenbosch for 100 years or more, and plants that were introduced during the first five years. For the more adventurous, some of the walks take the form of a challenge. During a Kirstenbosch

Bioblitz session, experts in their field and members of the public join forces to survey a natural area; seeking, identifying and recording as many species possible within a specified time. The results will then be posted on the SANBI and iSpot websites.

- The GIS Garden Game is a modern treasure hunt where participants receive clues with geographical coordinates and use their GPS enabled smart phones to locate the answers.
- Talks - Beginning at noon, a number of talks by experts in their field will take place. These include subjects such as using plant trails to understand and predict global change in fynbos, cycads, endangered plants and the Biodiversity Heritage Library.
- Films - From 2pm, four biodiversity-related short films will be screened after which experts involved in the telling of the stories in the films will lead discussions on relevant issues raised in each film. It's part of the CareTakers documentary film project about South Africa's rich natural heritage and the dedicated people who care for it. In the face of overwhelming biodiversity loss, habitat degradation, the threat of invasive species and human-induced climate change, there is a pressing need for clear calls to effective action. These films are intended to educate, advocate and inspire people to become active parts of the solution.

Booklet launch, climate change talk

International Biodiversity Day will also see the launch of a booklet about 10 years of biodiversity science at SANBI, listing SANBI's biggest achievements over the last 10 years, and will showcase several other important SANBI publications.

The day ends with a talk on Climate Change at 6pm by internationally renowned climate change scientist, Professor Guy Midgley, who will discuss the latest on trends and responses.

[View the full programme.](#)